

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Global Competitiveness .....</b>	<b>3</b>
• Where Does the U.S. Stand Internationally?	
• Where Does Florida Stand in Comparison to Other Nations?	
• Expert Warnings	
• What Do Students Say?	
• Where Do We Go From Here?	
<b>From the Sunshine State Standards to World Class Education Standards .....</b>	<b>7</b>
• The History of the Sunshine State Standards	
• The Review and Revision Process	
• Transitioning to World Class Education Standards	
• Resources for Teachers	
<b>Subject Area Updates .....</b>	<b>9</b>
• Reading/Language Arts	
• Mathematics	
• Science	
• Social Studies	
• Physical Education	
• Health	
• Other Standards	
<b>Implementation Issues .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Aligning Florida’s Assessments .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Next Steps .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix A .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix B .....</b>	<b>24</b>

## Introduction

The Legislature requires an annual report on the status of the state's K-12 standards (§1001.03 (1)):

“The review schedule and an annual status report must be submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives annually not later than January 1.”

This report addresses the transition from the Sunshine State Standards to World Class Education Standards and discusses the need for such a transition. Although Florida students continue to make academic gains, we still have an obligation to increase our expectations to ensure that they will be globally competitive.

Over the past decade, Florida has made great strides in increasing student achievement. Overall, the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results are very positive and clearly indicate that Florida's education efforts over the last decade are making an impact.

Florida again surpassed the national average in both fourth grade reading and mathematics.

In reading, Florida's Grade 4 average scale scores, the percentage of students performing at or above *Proficient*, and the percentage of students performing at or above *Basic* were greater than for the nation's public schools. Florida was one of only 18 states whose average fourth grade reading scale score increased between 2005 and 2007. In 2007, Florida's students in all demographic subgroups (Race/Ethnicity, Free/Reduced-Price Lunch, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners) had an average scale score that was significantly higher than their national counterparts.

Florida was one of only six states whose eighth grade reading average scale scores increased between 2005 and 2007.

In mathematics, Florida's Grade 4 average scale scores and the percentage of students performing at or above *Basic* were greater than that for the nation's public schools. In 2007, Florida's white, African American, and Hispanic students; English Language Learners; and students eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch had an average scale score that was significantly higher than their national counterparts. The same groups also had more students scoring at or above *Basic* achievement level than their national counterparts.

In reading, Florida's Grade 8 average scale scores, the percentage of students performing at or above *Proficient*, and the percentage of students performing at or above *Basic* were not significantly different from that of the nation's public schools. Florida was one of only six states whose eighth grade reading average scale scores

increased between 2005 and 2007. The reading scores of Florida's Hispanic students continue to be greater than those of the nation's Hispanic students.

In mathematics, Florida's Grade 8 percentage of students performing at or above *Basic* was not significantly different from that of the nation's public schools. Florida's Grade 8 Hispanic students outperformed the nation's Hispanic students in their average scale scores, the percentage of students performing at or above *Basic*, and the percentage of students performing at or above *Proficient*.

The reading scores of Florida's Hispanic students continue to be greater than those of the nation's Hispanic students.

In spite of this good news, there is still much work to be done. National data from the SAT and ACT college entrance exams indicate that, although participation rates in Florida are high, and participation rates of some of our minority groups lead the nation, our scores remain below the national average. In this new era of global competitiveness, this will not do.

Furthermore, over half (55%) of all students who enter Florida's public postsecondary institutions require remediation in mathematics, reading, and/or writing, and 62% of students who need remediation need it in multiple areas.<sup>1</sup> According to a recent report, students who fail to complete their remediation within two years "are very likely to discontinue their education rather than pursue other alternatives such as career/workforce training."<sup>2</sup>

In 2005-2006, the cost of remediation at the postsecondary level was \$129.8 million. These costs were shared by students (via tuition) and the state, with the state paying \$70 million of these costs. In other words, Florida taxpayers are paying twice: once to educate students in the K-12 grades, and again to remediate them after they graduate.

Florida taxpayers are paying twice: once to educate students in the K-12 grades, and again to remediate them after they graduate.

To ensure that our students are well-prepared for the new global arena, we have an obligation to establish higher expectations. In transitioning from the Sunshine State Standards to World Class Education Standards, we are doing just that.

World Class Education Standards (WCES) are defined as subject area standards that require skills in critical thinking, problem solving, communication, creativity, and innovation, as evidenced through the demonstration of contextual and applied-learning strategies and meaningful civic engagement.

When implemented through rigorous content and quality instruction, these standards will prepare all students to succeed in the international arena of global competition.

<sup>1</sup> Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (May 2007). *Half of all college students needing remediation drop out; Remediation completers do almost as well as other students.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

# Global Competitiveness

## Where Does the U.S. Stand Internationally?

We are all familiar with comparisons of the achievement of American students with that of others around the world. The importance of education cannot be understated, either from the perspective of personal fulfillment, personal career and economic success, or from the impact education has on a nation's economy. One study points out that when the population of a nation has, on average, an additional year of education, that nation's gross domestic product (GDP) increases by three to six percent.<sup>3</sup>

It is widely known that the achievement of American students trails that of their peers in other countries. For example, from the 1990s to the present time, experts have expressed alarm at the results of the TIMSS (Third International Math and Science Study) exams:

“The results are quite startling: We are at the bottom of the international distribution. In the past, when international results have been reported, many people have suggested, ‘It’s really not a problem because our best students are doing okay. This is really about those ‘other’ kids in the cities who are pulling our averages down. Everything is really okay at our best schools.’ That’s simply not true: Even our best students are not world class. The problems we must address affect not only our average kids, but even our best kids.”<sup>4</sup>

Although improvements were seen when the TIMSS was administered in 2003, U.S. students continue to be “middle of the pack” in mathematics. The achievement of U.S. students continues to be below that of Asian countries, such as Chinese Taipei, Japan, and Singapore:

---

<sup>3</sup> Andreas Schleicher, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), “Using Education to Compete by Working Smarter, Rather than by Working Harder or Cheaper,” November 2006.

<sup>4</sup> W. Schmidt, “The implications of TIMSS for teacher quality,” in *Shaping the Profession that Shapes the Future: Speeches from the AFT/NEA Conference on Teacher Quality* (1998), pp. 48 and 49.

## 2003 TIMSS Mathematics

- U.S. fourth grade students scored 518, on average, exceeding the international average of 495.
- U.S. fourth grade students outperformed their peers in 13 of the other 24 participating countries, and performed lower than their peers in 11 countries.

## 2003 TIMSS Science

- U.S. fourth grade students scored 536 on the TIMSS science assessment, which was higher than the international average of 489.
- Of the 24 other participating countries, fourth-graders in 16 countries demonstrated lower science scores, on average, than fourth graders in the United States, while students in three countries—Chinese Taipei, Japan, and Singapore—outperformed their peers in the United States.

Another international comparison is PISA, the Program for International Student Assessment. In 2003, it evaluated the mathematics achievement of 15 year-old students around the world. In both mathematics literacy and problem solving, the U.S. score was below the average score for industrialized nations and ranked 24<sup>th</sup> out of 29 nations in both categories.

The lead sentence in the *Education Week* article on this issue was:

“In their most recent lackluster showing on the world stage, students in the United States scored below average in mathematics literacy and problem-solving in an international comparison of the academic skills of teenagers in developed nations.”<sup>5</sup>

## **Where Does Florida Stand in Comparison to Other Nations?**

A new report has established a methodology that links the nation-to-nation results of the 2003 TIMSS exam to state results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by projecting the percent of students at or above proficient onto the TIMSS scale. The results indicate that, in mathematics, Florida ranks above the U.S. average but below 12 other countries. In science, Florida is well below the U.S. average and ranks below 19 other countries.<sup>6</sup> In both cases, we have a long way to

---

<sup>5</sup> “U.S. Students Fare Poorly in International Math Comparison,” *Education Week*, December 7, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Gary W. Phillips, *Chance Favors the Prepared Mind: Mathematics and Science Indicators for Comparing States and Nations*, November 14, 2007, p. 35.

go to meet the achievement of our international rivals. (See Appendix A for graphs showing Florida data.)

### **Expert Warnings**

In October 2005, a panel of experts from the National Academy of Science, the nation's leading science advisory group, sent out a call pleading for an urgent effort to strengthen America's scientific competitiveness:

“Decisive action is needed now, the report warned, adding that the nation's old advantages “are eroding at a time when many other nations are gathering strength....America must act now to preserve its strategic and economic security. The building blocks of our economic leadership are wearing away. The challenges that America faces are immense.”<sup>7</sup>

In addition, not only are other countries educating more students in advanced technical areas, but foreigners being educated in the United States are choosing to return home in record numbers.

### **What do students say?**

Suppose there is a move to make high school more rigorous by challenging students to learn more and be able to do more.

Are students up to this challenge?

A *Public Agenda* study from 1997 revealed the following perceptions from students:

- 65% readily admit they could do much better in school if they tried.
- 75% think students should pass only if required material has been learned.
- 79% say they would learn more if schools enforced being on time, along with the completion of homework.

When asked whether they thought that students would pay greater attention and study harder if they were required to learn more and be tested in order to graduate, vast majorities of students answered “yes,” indicating that our students are ready for higher expectations. The following percentages of students indicated that high school should be more rigorous:

---

<sup>7</sup> W. J. Broad, “Top Advisory Panel Warns of an Erosion of the U.S. Competitive Edge in Science,” *The New York Times*, October 13, 2005.

- 79% of all students
- 65% of the hard core disengaged students
- 74% of white students
- 80% of African American students
- 82% of Hispanic students
- 71% of adults

According to this study:

"Half of teens in public schools today told us their schools fail to challenge them to do their best. Students across the country spoke about how little work they do to earn acceptable grades and, consequently, how boring and meaningless their classes are....**The students seem to be crying out for the adults in their lives to take a stand and inspire them to do more** (emphasis added)."<sup>8</sup>

Those findings were from 1997. A more recent study from the National Governor's Association (NGA) found that things haven't changed much:

- Of students who plan to graduate from high school, 65% agree with this statement: "I would work harder if high school offered more demanding and interesting courses."
- Of teens who have dropped out or are considering dropping out, 66% say they would be more likely to stay in school if they received personal attention to help them with their studies.<sup>9</sup>

### **Where do we go from here?**

A recent study that analyzed high-performing school districts from across the globe points out that "South Korea and Singapore demonstrate that a school system can go from low performance to high performance within a few decades."<sup>10</sup>

How can this happen? According to the study, establishing rigorous standards and high expectations for students is the first step, followed by the selection and development of high quality teachers who consistently deliver high quality instruction.

---

<sup>8</sup> Deborah Wadsworth, Executive Director, Public Agenda in J. Johnson & S. Farkas, *Getting By: What American Teenagers Really Think About Their Schools*, (New York: Public Agenda, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> National Governors Association, Summary of "RateYourFuture.org," July 16, 2005.

<sup>10</sup> McKinsey & Company, *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top*, September 2007, p. 40.

**From  
Sunshine State Standards  
to  
World Class Education Standards**

**The History of the Sunshine State Standards**

The Sunshine State Standards were first approved by the State Board of Education in 1996 as a means of identifying academic expectations for student achievement in Florida. These original standards were written in seven subject areas and were divided into four separate grade clusters (PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12).

As Florida moved toward greater accountability for student achievement at each grade level, the Sunshine State Standards were further defined with specific K-8 “Grade Level Expectations” added in 1999. However, as time went on, two realities appeared that magnified the need to increase the level of rigor in Florida’s academic standards. First, as the achievement of Florida students began to increase over time, it was recognized that the level of rigor of the 1996 standards was inadequate to address the increased levels of achievement registered by our students. Second, ample evidence from both national and international measures of student achievement indicated the urgent need for even higher expectations for all of our students.

The Department of Education recognized the need for a systematic approach to review and revise all of the academic standards, and on January 17, 2006, the State Board of Education adopted a six-year cycle that set forth a schedule for the regular review and revision of all K-12 content standards. However, this move went far beyond increasing the rigor of the standards and included the alignment of the new standards with assessments, instructional materials, professional development, and teacher licensure exams. With this comprehensive approach, the new standards and their higher levels of rigor will be fully integrated into the entire culture of K-12 instruction and assessment. This move sets the stage for higher levels of rigor and higher academic achievement for decades to come.

Then, in 2006, the Florida Legislature stated its commitment to higher and more challenging standards for Florida’s children by passing House Bill 7087. Florida law now reads:

*§ 1001.03(1) ...The state board shall establish a schedule to facilitate the periodic review of the standards to ensure adequate rigor, relevance, logical student progression, and integration of reading, writing, and mathematics across all subject areas.*

This is a commitment that is shared by educators across Florida, as evidenced by the overwhelming level of public feedback to this revision process.

### **The Review and Revision Process**

The process for revising the Sunshine State Standards entails a variety of activities including multiple opportunities for stakeholder input. These activities include meetings with content supervisors, teachers, content specialists, professional organizations, and other stakeholders. Continued stakeholder input is encouraged through both hard copy and a Web-based system that ensures stakeholder ease in providing meaningful feedback so that the Sunshine State Standards will represent multiple viewpoints.

### **Transitioning to World Class Education Standards**

The implementation of new state standards takes place incrementally. Generally speaking, it takes a full three years to thoroughly and completely transition to the new standards. This process occurs in three phases:

**Year 1: Initial Implementation.** The teacher becomes aware of the new standards and uses crosswalks that compare the old standards to the new in order to see how he or she can begin to incorporate them into existing lesson plans. Districts begin realigning their curriculum based upon the new standards, and professional development linked to the new standards begins.

**Year 2: Adaptation.** The teacher becomes more familiar with the new standards and how to incorporate them into his or her lesson plans. Districts have a newly realigned curriculum that guides instruction and ensures consistency in instruction across the district. Professional development helps to build knowledge among teachers regarding the new standards.

**Year 3: Full Implementation.** The teacher fully and confidently includes the new standards in daily instructional strategies and activities. Realigned assessments are given to measure student progress on the new standards.

## Subject Area Updates

The Sunshine State Standards were written in 1996, and ten years later, in January 2006, the State Board of Education approved a six-year review and revise cycle so that the standards could be updated.

However, both the State Board of Education and the Legislature came to realize that the demands of global competition required a quicker turn-around of the standards, and asked the Department to speed up their review schedule.

A comprehensive chart outlining where each subject area is in this new review and revise cycle can be viewed in Appendix B.

### Reading/Language Arts

The Florida Department of Education initiated the review of the Reading and Language Arts Standards in 2005 by using analyses of the Florida standards articulated by external groups. Their feedback helped to guide the revisions.

These external groups included the Council of Basic Education, the College Board, the International Center for Leadership in Education, the Fordham Foundation, and the Koret Task Force, all of which made a number of common observations and provided solid recommendations that produced the guiding principles for the revision process. These guiding principles included:

- Streamlining the standards so that the breadth of coverage is more manageable. A reduction in the number and scope of benchmarks assists teachers with lesson planning, curriculum pacing, and focusing on the essential knowledge and skills needed for students in each grade level.
- Organizing the revision by specific grade level, and incorporating the extensive list of Grade Level Expectations into grade level benchmarks (or eliminating them) due to duplication or a lack of cognitive complexity.

### Reading and Language Arts

- Approved by the State Board of Education in January 2007.
- Initial implementation began in 2007-2008.
- Professional development will take place from 2007-2010.
- Assessments fully aligned to the new standards are field tested in 2010.
- Assessments fully aligned to the new standards are administered in 2011.
- For more information, see Appendix A.

- Restructuring the numerical identification system to reflect the specific grade level of standards and benchmarks.
- Using clear and concise language in standards and benchmarks.
- Including the rigor reflected in the grades K-5 benchmarks into the grades 6-12 benchmarks.
- Consistently increasing cognitive complexity across all grade levels to encourage the development of specific critical thinking skills and relevance of content.
- At the secondary level, including more rigorous skills needed for postsecondary success and work-related skills.

Furthermore, to ensure that the new standards meet the needs of all students, meetings were held with staff members from the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services and the Bureau of Academic Achievement Through Language Acquisition, as well as teachers representing both groups. This helped to facilitate adding access points for students with significant cognitive disabilities and the development of English Language Proficiency standards for English Language Learners. Meetings were also held with the Office of Assessment and School Performance to evaluate consistency in concepts across grade levels and to ensure that the standards are measurable.

In addition to revising the content already included in the standards, the Department was strongly committed to ensuring that the standards address 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. For example, the areas of Technology and Information Literacy were not addressed in the 1996 standards, but have a prominent place in the 2007 revisions.

**Table 1: Reading and Language Arts Content Strands**

1996	2007
Reading	Reading Process
Literature	Literary Analysis
Writing	Writing Process
Language	Writing Applications
Listening, Viewing, and Speaking	Communication
	Information and Media Literacy

Revisions to the Reading and Language Arts Standards introduced separate standards and benchmarks for grades K-8, as opposed to the broad grade bands of the 1996 standards. New strands were developed to reflect the process for reading

and writing. High levels of cognitive challenge were incorporated into each of the benchmarks through the use of verbs such as *create*, *develop*, and *analyze* to ensure higher level instruction. A crosswalk that further delineates the shifts between the 1996 and 2007 standards is shown in Table 1 (above).

The Just Read, Florida! Web site at [www.justreadflorida.com](http://www.justreadflorida.com) provides links to many organizations that provide a wealth of resources for teachers, including the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), the Florida Literacy and Reading Excellence (FLaRE) Center, Reading First Professional Development (RFPD), and the Northeast Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC).

## **Mathematics**

In September 2006, the Office of Mathematics and Science convened a committee of external stakeholders to consider the framework for the revision of the Sunshine State Standards for mathematics. The goal was to strive for consensus amongst content experts, educational experts, researchers, parents, teachers, and interested members of the community regarding the revisions.

Experts in national and international mathematics curriculum articulated their analyses of the 1996 Sunshine State Standards for mathematics benchmarks and grade level expectations to a group of stakeholders called "the framers," whose task was to establish the framework for the revisions. These experts also presented research on the exemplary standards used both by other states and by countries that lead the world in student achievement. There was agreement by all reviewers that Florida's standards fit the description "a mile wide and an inch deep" and lacked coherence.

Combined with their own expertise in mathematics curriculum, the framers used this information to define the structure and provide recommendations that would become the guiding principles for the writers of the standards to follow.

From October 2006 to January 2007, another committee called "the writers" met to write the new standards and benchmarks according to the structure that the framers established. This was an iterative process, with the framers reviewing the work and providing comments to the writers. Responding to calls for clarity, coherence, and minimal redundancy, the numbers of K-8 grade level expectations were reduced from an average of more than 80 per grade to less than 20 benchmarks per grade. High school benchmarks went from 9-12 grade bands in the 1996 standards to

### **Mathematics**

- Approved by the State Board of Education in September 2007.
- Initial implementation begins in 2008-2009.
- Professional development will take place from 2007-2010.
- Assessments fully aligned to the new standards are field tested in 2010.
- Assessments fully aligned to the new standards are administered in 2011.
- For more information, see Appendix A.

specific benchmarks for content including Calculus, Discrete Mathematics, Trigonometry, and Financial Literacy standards for the first time.

From February to March 2007, the drafts of the standards were provided to the public via online sources and through public forums in various Florida districts. Online reviewers were able to rate the benchmarks and provide comment. Overall, there were 43,025 ratings of 504 draft standards and benchmarks. Of these reviewers, 1,391 interested persons completed the visitor profile. These reviewers identified themselves, in descending order of numbers of reviewers, as teachers, administrators, district staff, other interested persons, parents, and no response. Additionally, experts in mathematics and mathematics curriculum were gathered to provide an in-depth review of the drafts for comment and revision.

From April 2007 to June 2007, the benchmarks were revised based on this considerable input from the committees and other reviewers.

The new World Class Education Standards for Mathematics are organized by grade level for grades K-8. The revised standards have fewer topics, which means less repetition from year to year, and a move from “covering topics” to teaching them in-depth for long-term learning. Hence, teachers will need to know how to begin instruction for each topic at the concrete level and move to the abstract and then connect student knowledge to more complex topics. This process will enable students to build, draw, and explain their knowledge of mathematical topics.

### Grade Level Expectations: Mathematics

Grade Level	Number of Old Benchmarks	Number of New Benchmarks
K	67	11
1	78	14
2	84	21
3	88	17
4	89	21
5	77	23
6	78	19
7	89	22
8	93	19

At the high school level, the mathematics standards are organized into familiar “Bodies of Knowledge” such as Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, Probability, and Statistics. There are two Bodies of Knowledge that may not be recognized as part of the traditional mathematics curriculum. These are Discrete Mathematics and Financial Literacy.

Discrete Mathematics consists of many of the topics in mathematics that are becoming more and more applicable in the modern era. Computer and electronic applications of mathematics are necessarily discrete. Some of the topics in Discrete Mathematics include set theory, graph theory, matrix algebra, recursive functions, and more.

Financial Literacy has been created in response to the combination of a long history of financial matters in mathematics education, the near-universal relevance of financial matters and mathematics in people’s lives, and the development of financial mathematics programs at university levels.

The Bodies of Knowledge do not comprise courses. Standards and benchmarks will be pulled from the various Bodies of Knowledge to write specific courses in mathematics at the secondary level.

<b><u>Old</u> 9-12 Benchmarks (Same for all 9-12)</b>	<b><u>New</u> Body of Knowledge Benchmarks</b>
12 in Number Sense, Concepts, and Operations 8 in Measurement 5 in Geometry and Spatial Sense 7 in Data Analysis and Probability	84 for Algebra 47 for Geometry 9 for Probability 28 for Statistics 24 for Trigonometry 52 for Calculus 41 for Financial Literacy 41 for Discrete Mathematics

Publishers that currently have instructional materials on the Florida mathematics adoption list are being asked to provide correlations that align their adopted materials to the new standards. Since 2007-2008 is a transition year for reading, language arts, and mathematics, it is important that teachers and principals continue to use the standards alignment for the currently assessed standards while becoming familiar with the new standards.

The Florida Center for Research in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (FCR-STEM) Web site at [www.fcrstem.org](http://www.fcrstem.org) will provide resources for teachers on the implementation of the mathematic standards. In addition, it will provide valuable resources and best practices for mathematics instruction in the classroom.

## **Science**

The review and revision of the Sunshine State Standards for Science began in the summer of 2007 and is following the same process as was used for the Mathematics revisions. Currently (November 2007) the first draft is online and public comments are being solicited.

Once edits are incorporated into the draft, it is expected that new World Class Education Standards for Science will be brought to the State Board for approval in early 2008, with initial implementation to begin in the 2008-2009 school year.

### **Science**

- Currently being reviewed and revised
- Approval by the State Board of Education tentatively set for February 2008.
- Initial implementation begins in 2008-2009.
- For more information, see Appendix B.

## **Social Studies**

Likewise, the revisions to the Sunshine State Standards for Social Studies began in the summer of 2007. However, due to funding considerations, further development was temporarily delayed until December 2007.

It is anticipated that the new World Class Education Standards for Social Studies will be presented to the State Board for approval in the fall of 2008, with initial implementation to begin during the 2009-2010 school year.

### **Social Studies**

- Currently being reviewed and revised
- Tentative approval by the State Board of Education set for fall 2008.
- Initial implementation begins in 2009-2010.
- For more information, see Appendix B.

## **Physical Education and Health**

The hallmark of Governor Charlie Crist's education reforms is Physical Education (PE). His goal is to implement a 21<sup>st</sup> century PE/Health program to address the issue of childhood obesity and lifelong wellness.

The committees writing the new PE Standards and Health Standards will have World Class Education Standards for both areas ready for approval by the State Board of Education in the summer of 2007, with initial implementation to begin during the 2008-2009 school year.

### **Physical Education and Health**

- Currently being reviewed and revised
- Tentative approval by the State Board of Education set for summer 2008.
- Initial implementation begins in 2008-2009.
- For more information, see Appendix B.

## **Other Standards**

Other standards will be reviewed and revised in future years. For detailed information, refer to Appendix B.

## ***World Languages***

Currently, Florida schools provide instruction in sixteen world languages:

<b>Languages Taught in Florida Schools</b>		
Arabic	Greek and Classical Greek	Japanese
American Sign Language	Haitian	Latin
Chinese	Haitian Creole	Portuguese
French	Hebrew	Russian
German	Italian	Spanish

Growing numbers of students are electing to study foreign languages as, in almost any job, knowing another language sets an individual apart from others. In addition, many new jobs require fluency in a second language.

Plans are underway to begin the review and revision of the Sunshine State Standards for World Languages in the summer of 2008.

## ***Workforce and Career Courses***

Courses that prepare students for future employment need to be kept up-to-date, as technology and workforce requirements change at an amazing pace. However, some elective career and technical courses have academic standards integrated throughout, so the review of these courses must take place after that of most other academic areas. In this way, we can ensure that integrated career and technical courses contain the most current academic standards.

Summer 2008 is the target date for beginning the review and revision of courses in career and technical education.

## ***The Arts***

The fine arts, drama, and music are areas where many students find an outlet for their creative talents. Florida now requires each high school student to have a Major Area of Interest (MAI) as part of their graduation requirement, and there are over forty MAIs in the arts which Florida students may choose.

We propose reviewing and revising the standards for all areas of the arts beginning in the summer of 2009.

## Implementation Issues

As the new standards are implemented, it is important that Florida look to lessons learned from other countries regarding how to ensure that students get the full benefit of these higher expectations. A recent report titled *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top* analyzes the world's best performing school systems and arrives at a series of cross-cultural conclusions. The first is that such systems "start by setting clear and high expectations for what individual students should know, understand, and be able to do."<sup>11</sup> In establishing World Class Education Standards, this is what Florida is in the process of doing.

However, the report makes it clear that high-performing districts do not rest after developing high standards and high expectations. Just as important is the necessity for high quality instruction:

"All the evidence from both the high- and low-performing systems shows that the most effective way to deliver sustained and substantial improvements in outcomes is through sustained and substantial improvements in instruction."<sup>12</sup>

This report focuses on the importance of selecting and developing teachers who consistently provide rigorous and high quality instruction. The authors state: "The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers."<sup>13</sup>

They make the case that in educational systems that have developed strong standards without commensurate teacher training "change will be limited,"<sup>14</sup> and they identify four professional development practices that high achieving systems share. The good news is that Florida has implemented some of these practices and some policymakers appear interested in implementing others:

1. **Build practical skills during initial training.** This means taking teachers-in-training out of the colleges of education and placing them into classrooms early and often. This was a recommendation of the Florida State Board of Education in 2006.
2. **Place coaches in schools to support teachers.** One-on-one coaching, teacher observations, providing feedback after observation, and the modeling of lessons provided as job imbedded professional development are seen as efficient and effective ways to improve instruction, and are currently used in Florida in the area of reading.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> McKinsey & Company, *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top*, September 2007, p. 35.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Federal funds support coaches in grades K-3 for the purpose of reading instruction, while state funds support coaches in grades 4-12 who emphasize content literacy instruction.

3. **Select and develop effective instructional leaders.** The William Cecil Golden School Leadership Development Program was established by the 2006 Florida Legislature to provide a high quality, competency-based, customized, comprehensive, and coordinated statewide professional development system for current and emerging school leaders.
4. **Enable teachers to learn from each other.** In high-performing systems, allowing teachers the time to interact and plan with their peers “are the norm and constant features of school life.”<sup>16</sup>

As Florida begins implementing our new World Class Education Standards, it will be important to consider these lessons learned from high-performing systems.

### **Resources for Teachers**

Standards that have not yet been revised or are in the process of revision are still known as “The Sunshine State Standards,” and are available on the Florida Standards Web site at [www.flstandards.org](http://www.flstandards.org). This is also the site where public comment is solicited on standards revisions and where teachers can find crosswalks between the old and new standards.

Once the newly revised World Class Education Standards have been approved by the State Board of Education, they are transferred to the World Class Education Standards Web site at [www.floridastandards.org](http://www.floridastandards.org). When all of the standards have transitioned from Sunshine State Standards to World Class Education Standards, the “flstandards.org” Web site will cease to exist.

School districts, in collaboration with the Department of Education, are working to design instruction to teach the new standards. These new resources and strategies can be used to assist teachers with implementing the recently approved standards and will be available at [www.floridastandards.org](http://www.floridastandards.org).

### **Instructional Materials**

The process for the creation and adoption of textbooks that are aligned with World Class Education Standards is currently on a different schedule than that of the standards revision, and the Department is working to develop a revised schedule.

### **Course Descriptions**

As each new set of standards are approved, new course descriptions will be developed and existing ones updated to include the new standards. These newly revised courses will constitute an integral part of the new Course Code Directory, which will be unveiled in January 2008.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

## Aligning Florida's Assessments

The process of developing new tests takes several years. This time is required to ensure that all professional standards for high-stakes assessments are followed, including the involvement of educators. A careful process will ensure that the new tests are aligned with the new standards, are grade-level appropriate, and are valid and reliable. Furthermore, the awareness and adoption timeline for the new standards will allow districts time to fully implement the new standards to ensure that the need for instructional validity has been met.

During the new test development phase, students will continue to take the current forms of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). For reading and mathematics, the transition years will be 2007-08 through 2009-10. For testing in the school years 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10, the Reading and Mathematics tests will be designed in such a way as to minimize the gap between what the standards say must be taught and what is actually tested, yet they will still maintain enough similarity to the existing tests to allow us to report scores using the current FCAT scale.

The Department will provide guidance during 2007-08 to assist districts in bridging the gap between the new standards and the knowledge that will be tested during the transition years. The assessment Content Advisory Committees met in August 2007 and this guidance is currently being prepared.

Preliminary analysis by the Department's Bureau of K-12 Assessment indicates that teaching the new reading standards will provide appropriate preparation for the transition years for the standards assessed on FCAT Reading, since they will not be tested until 2011. This is also true for the standards assessed on Writing+. Because of the similarities in the standards, the Department will delay the revision of the writing assessment to parallel changes to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Writing exam. It is likely that a new writing test will not be in place until 2012 or 2013.

The analysis of the current draft of the mathematics standards indicates that some of the grade-level content currently tested is *not* in the new standards; therefore, in order to ensure the opportunity for student success on FCAT, instruction for some tested benchmarks may need to continue. As stated above, details on what grade level mathematics content should continue to be included in the curriculum will be provided by the Department in late 2007.

The Assessment Content Advisory Committees are working on a new vision and design for state assessments for the Sunshine State Standards. The committee met in April 2007 and August 2007 to work on the redesign. As the proposals become more specific, the Department and Advisory Committee members will communicate the proposals to the State Board of Education and Superintendents.

Currently, the districts can expect:

- Tests designed to support, to the extent possible, 21<sup>st</sup> Century teaching and learning.
- Increasing use of computer-based testing.
- A possible change in which grade-level tests have performance tasks.
- Different reporting categories, e.g., vocabulary for the reading test.
- Mathematics tests that are more narrow in the scope of content tested, but with questions that measure deeper understanding of this content.

The timeline for preparing new generation tests for Reading and Mathematics to measure the new World Class Education State Standards is:

<b>Transitioning to a New World Class Assessment</b>	
<b>Fall 2007-Spring 2008</b>	Develop test design, item specifications, and new items
<b>Fall 2008</b>	Conduct statewide educator reviews of new test items for content, bias, and sensitivity
<b>Spring/Summer 2009</b>	Assemble items into field test forms
<b>Spring 2010</b>	Conduct field testing of new items
<b>Spring 2011</b>	Baseline NEW Assessment First student scores reported on new test Conduct vertical scaling study on new tests
<b>Summer/Fall 2011</b>	Set new Achievement Levels and Graduation Scores
<b>Spring 2012</b>	Report results with new achievement levels, student growth scores, and norm-referenced scores

The baseline test administration will occur in the spring of 2011, with results reported

as a grade-level scale score (not a developmental scale) and content subscores. New achievement levels for each grade and subject, as well as graduation standards, will be established in the fall of 2011 and reported for the first time in 2012. This year will also be the first for reporting a developmental scale score. During 2011, with the guidance of Florida's Assessment Technical Advisory Committee, statistical procedures would be implemented, to the extent possible, to link the old scores to the new scores for accountability purposes.

Like other states that are in the process of revising their state standards and assessments, Florida faces some challenges and related decisions on how to handle the transition. The Department will seek guidance from advisory committees and the State Board of Education in determining how to proceed. The Department will employ an open process for gathering technical and policy guidance on these decisions.

Some of the decisions to be made include:

- The use of common benchmarks to link "old" FCAT scores to *new* Florida standards assessment scores.
- The use of the equipercentile method to link "old" achievement levels for achievement level reporting in 2011.
- Determining a graduation measure for 10<sup>th</sup> graders in 2011.
- Determining the legality and validity of use of a concordant score for students needing to retake the Grade 10 assessment beginning in spring 2011.
- Determining a Grade 3 reading promotion measure for 2011 and a concordant score for retained students in 2012.

Changes in the test will affect Grade 3 reading promotion requirements, and there are options for the Department and State Board of Education to consider on this issue. Among these are:

**Option 1:** Maintain two testing programs with retained students taking the "old" FCAT and first-time test-takers being given the new state assessment. With this option, the test administration challenges for schools would be tremendous, as would the requirement for Department staff and contractors to create and score two different reading tests. It is very likely that administration errors would occur, such as students taking the wrong tests.

**Option 2:** Identify a score on the new assessment that accurately predicts or concords with the current requirements, and drop the "old" test after 2010.

Changes in the test will also have an impact on graduation requirements.

The Department and the State Board of Education, with legal and technical guidance, may consider several options, including:

**Option 1:** Maintain two testing programs with retake students taking forms of the “old” FCAT Retake and first-time test-takers are being given the new assessment. The process of ensuring that students are taking the correct test and tracking these different cohorts of students would be challenging.

**Option 2:** Identify a score on the new assessment that accurately predicts or concords with the current requirements, and drop the “old” test after 2010.

**Option 3:** Provide the “old” FCAT Retake for a limited time, for example two years, and then for students still not meeting the “old” graduation requirement, use concordant scores on other assessments (e.g., SAT, ACT, GED).

If the current timeline for revision of the Science standards is maintained, the Department anticipates that new test items will be field tested in 2011 and the baseline year for a new test of these standards would occur in 2012.

## Next Steps

The study that analyzed top-performing educational systems across the world noted that “All of the top-performing and rapidly improving systems have curricular standards which set clear and high expectations for what students should achieve.”<sup>17</sup>

It is clear that we have started down the right path. The Department of Education will continue to work on transitioning our Sunshine State Standards to World Class Education Standards. In cooperation with the State Board of Education, the Office of the Governor, and the Legislature, implementation will be expedited as time and resources allow.

Students in Florida no longer compete with students in the next district or the next state for jobs. We are now living in a time of global competition, and we owe it to our children to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge that will enhance their competitiveness in this new arena.

Establishing World Class Education Standards and providing the resources for teachers to implement them with vigor will help us to do just that.

##

---

<sup>17</sup> McKinsey & Company, *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top*, September 2007, p. 35.